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# Healthful Low-Cost Feeding



of

## Alabama Families

HOMEMAKERS' SERVICE SERIES—BULLETIN No. 1

SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS

ALABAMA COLLEGE

MONTEVALLO, ALABAMA

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## Foreword

*This bulletin has been prepared by Miss Garnet Searle, Associate Professor of Home Economics, and Miss Elizabeth Waldrop, home economics senior student, and with the valued cooperation of the Sociology Department. A number of visits to nearby communities, commissaries, and homes were made with staff and student members of the Sociology Department for the purpose of ascertaining food facts regarding the families and communities. These included such facts as size of family, age of family members, types of meals, available foods in local markets, methods of cooking, food purchases and local prices. It is hoped that this bulletin will serve as a practical guide to better family feeding in Alabama and will be of special service to Alabama families with limited incomes during the present economic crisis.*

# Feeding the Family at Low Cost

The less a family has to spend for food the more important it is that every cent is well spent. Fortunately, the foods of greatest value to the family are not always the most expensive. Knowing how to manage one's income and what to buy is the secret of bringing the family safely through hard times.

## Suggestions for Planning Low Cost Meals

The following items, if included **daily** in the diet, will make the daily meals safe for the family.

**MILK** (sweet or buttermilk)—**at least** a pint for each child and the pregnant or nursing mother; **at least** a glass for each adult.

**TOMATOES, RAW CABBAGE, or ORANGES**—**daily** use of these foods prevents scurvy. Turnip greens and Irish potatoes are valuable for this also but are not as effective.

**WHOLE GRAIN CEREALS** (such as oatmeal, or bread made from whole wheat flour)—**at least once each day**.

**FRUIT** (dried or fresh)—should be included **once each day**. Fresh fruit should be eaten **as often as can be afforded**.

**EGG or MEAT, or CHEESE or DRIED BEANS or PEAS**—**once each day** if possible.

Since the child's food needs are greater than a grown person's, his diet should be checked carefully. The following foods are important:

**MILK**—A small glass at every meal.

**TOMATOES** (canned, ripe fresh, or cooked)—or an **ORANGE** once a day.

An **EGG** a day.

**COD LIVER OIL**—Two teaspoons each day for children under two years of age. This is particularly necessary in a smoky town or during winter months if the child spends much time indoors. It may be omitted if the child is out of doors in the sunshine daily and clothed so that some skin surface is exposed.

## Thrift Suggestions

**MILK**—As the amount to be spent for food becomes less, the proportion of the total amount to be spent for milk should increase. This is because milk **does more** for the body than any other food and does it **more cheaply**. In a very low cost diet build the diet around bread and milk

and add to these two foods as many fruits and vegetables as can be afforded. The amount spent for milk can be lessened by using buttermilk in place of sweet milk in cooking or as a beverage. Canned milk is cheaper than fresh and may be used in cooking or as a beverage. One can of milk diluted with an equal amount of water is equivalent to one quart of milk. Cheapest of all fresh milk substitutes is dried skim milk. This is satisfactory for use in cooking or even drinking and so inexpensive that six (6) quarts of skim milk may be made from a pound for fifteen (15) cents. If dried skim milk is used **extra butter** should be included in the diet to make up for the lack of fat in the skim milk.

**CEREALS**—The **whole grained cereals** are best because they contain valuable substances often thrown away in milling. Whole wheat grains may be bought at a low cost and ground at a neighborhood mill. This meal is a better food than cornmeal. Corn is best home ground as it is cheaper and nothing is removed as is often the case in that purchased ready-ground. Oatmeal is an excellent whole grain breakfast cereal. Ready-to-eat cereals, such as Cornflakes and Puffed Wheat, are more expensive than oatmeal and not as valuable. Cereals are cheaper when bought in bulk than in packages.

**SWEETS**—Cane molasses, Alabama syrup, and honey are cheap substitutes for sugar. They are less concentrated than sugar and contain valuable mineral substances. Candy is an expensive form of sweets and unnecessary.

**VEGETABLES**—Potatoes are inexpensive. Home grown vegetables, such as turnip greens, cabbage, collards, mustard greens, onions, beets, and carrots are inexpensive and usually found on the market. Dried beans and peas are cheap and may be used as a meat substitute. Canned tomatoes are especially valuable. **Each day** tomatoes or raw cabbage should be included in the meals.

**FRUITS**—Dried fruits are economical. Summer home dried and canned peaches, apples, pears, and berries reduce the winter fruit bill and protect the family's health. Fresh fruits add to the flavor and value of the meals and should be used when they can be afforded. Oranges or tangerines are especially valuable. When home grown fruits (such as apples, peaches, pears, berries) are on the market they may be bought at low cost.

**MEATS and MEAT SUBSTITUTES**—**Dried Beans and Peas** are the cheapest meat substitute food available but are not the best that may be used.

**Milk and Cheese** furnish a good protein at low cost and may be used in place of meat.

**Meat** is the most expensive rich protein food. It can be used to advantage in stews and soups. In this way it is less expensive and adds to the flavor of the meals. Fat meat is much less valuable as a protein food.

**Liver** may be bought at low cost and is excellent to use in inexpensive meals. It should be served once a week at least. It is more valuable than any other meat because it is high in iron and Vitamin A.

**Eggs** are an excellent food, particularly for children. When they are fifteen (15) cents a dozen they are a much cheaper protein food than meat and should be used in place of it.

**FATS**—Small amounts of **butter** may be used for table use. A cheaper fat such as **white pork** may be used in seasoning vegetables. In gingerbread or molasses cookies, **lard** or **lard substitutes** may be used.

**MISCELLANEOUS**—In a low cost diet such foods as **olives** and **pickles** should be **used sparingly** for they are expensive and add practically nothing to the value of the diet. **Nuts** add variety to the diet and are a valuable food. **Peanuts** and **Pecans** are a cheap and valuable home grown product. Home grown peanuts may be made into peanut butter by grinding and mixing smooth with a small amount of good vegetable oil.

### Buying Suggestions

Buy in as large quantity as is practical, considering the storage space one has. Buying in bulk is much cheaper than buying in package or container. Buying food in small glass jars is extravagant. Foods which are purchased ready cooked and ready to serve cost more than similar foods cooked at home. The **cheaper grades of canned foods** often contain **more food value** than the more expensive. The price is lower because the food may be less attractive in appearance or perhaps more mature. For example the large English peas are cheaper than the tiny grade but are much more nutritious.

### Kitchen Economies

Good food is often wasted by throwing away less attractive outer leaves of cabbage, or other vegetables. Meat bones and meat trimmings, water in which vegetables have been cooked and table left-overs should be saved and used in soups, sauces, salads and made over dishes.

Food may be wasted by using poor cooking methods. Cooking too long and in too much water means a waste of valuable vitamins and minerals. Careful seasoning will improve the

flavor of mild foods. Proper and careful cooking is as important a factor in the low cost diet as knowing what to buy.

### **The Family's Meals for \$7.00 a Week with No Home Produced Food**

For the family, consisting of two adults, the mother who does her own work, and the father who works two or three days a week, a boy of seventeen (17) years of age, a girl of fourteen (14) years of age, a boy of ten (10) years of age, and a girl of eight (8) years of age and a girl six (6) years of age, where there is little money and no home produced food the following adequate food supply can be purchased for seven (7) dollars a week, costs based on the prices in Montevallo and nearby stores.

The actual caloric and protein needs of this family have been computed and the list of foods in the market order have been chosen so that these needs are met. As many foods rich in vitamins and minerals as can be afforded have been included. If more money can be spent for food, increase the milk from twenty-six (26) quarts to twenty-eight (28)-thirty-eight (38) quarts; the two (2) dozen eggs to two and one-half ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ ) dozen; the thirty (30) pounds of potatoes to forty (40) pounds; the three (3) pounds dried peas and beans to four (4) pounds; the two (2) pounds dried fruit to four (4) and the one and one-half ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ ) pounds butter to two (2) pounds.

### **Weekly Market Order for a Family of Seven (Prices at Montevallo and Nearby Stores in 1932)**

| <b>Food</b>                  | <b>Measure</b>    | <b>Item Cost</b> | <b>Total Cost</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Milk (26 quarts)</b>      |                   |                  | <b>\$1.59</b>     |
| Sweet .....                  | 4 qts.            | .50              |                   |
| Butter .....                 | 13 qts.           | .65              |                   |
| Unsweetened evaporated ..... | 3 cans            | .24              |                   |
| Cheese .....                 | $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. | .05              |                   |
| Dried Skim Milk .....        | 1 lb.             | .15              |                   |
| <b>Cereals</b>               |                   |                  | <b>.90</b>        |
| Cornmeal .....               | 12 lbs.           | .15              |                   |
| Oatmeal .....                | 1 lb.             | .08              |                   |
| Whole Wheat Flour .....      | 8 lbs.            | .40              |                   |
| White Flour .....            | 8 lbs.            | .22              |                   |
| Rice .....                   | 1 lb.             | .05              |                   |
| <b>Vegetables</b>            |                   |                  | <b>1.49</b>       |
| Irish Potatoes .....         | 25 lbs.           | .50              |                   |
| Sweet Potatoes .....         | 5 lbs.            | .15              |                   |
| Dried Peas and Beans .....   | 3 lb.             | .18              |                   |
| Onions .....                 | 1 lb.             | .03              |                   |
| Turnip Greens .....          | 6 lbs.            | .30              |                   |
| Cabbage .....                | 5 lbs.            | .25              |                   |
| Rutabagas .....              | 2 lbs.            | .08              |                   |

|                        |         |     |               |
|------------------------|---------|-----|---------------|
| <b>Meat—Fish</b>       |         |     | <b>.45</b>    |
| Stew Meat .....        | 1 lb.   | .08 |               |
| White Pork .....       | 3 lbs.  | .27 |               |
| Liver .....            | 1 lb.   | .10 |               |
| <b>Fruit</b>           |         |     | <b>.93</b>    |
| Tomatoes .....         | 6 cans  | .50 |               |
| Apples, fresh .....    | 1½ doz. | .13 |               |
| Apples, dried .....    | 1 lb.   | .06 |               |
| Tangerines .....       | 14      | .14 |               |
| Prunes, dried .....    | 1 lb.   | .10 |               |
| <b>Fats</b>            |         |     | <b>.94</b>    |
| Butter .....           | 1½ lbs. | .44 |               |
| Lard .....             | 5 lbs.  | .45 |               |
| Peanut Butter .....    | ½ lb.   | .05 |               |
| <b>Sugar, Sweets</b>   |         |     | <b>.27</b>    |
| Granulated Sugar ..... | 3½ lbs. | .18 |               |
| Molasses .....         | 2 lbs.  | .09 |               |
| <b>Eggs</b> .....      | 2 doz.  |     | <b>.25</b>    |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>   |         |     | <b>.18</b>    |
| Coffee .....           | ½ lb.   | .11 |               |
| Soda .....             | ¼ c.    | .02 |               |
| Salt .....             | ¼ c.    | .02 |               |
| Spice and Pepper ..... |         | .03 |               |
| <b>Total</b> .....     |         |     | <b>\$7.00</b> |

### Suggested Menus for Preceding Market Order

The meals given below have been planned in the most economical way. They **do not** include **all** of the essentials of the **best diet for health** but they **will keep** the family in good condition.

| Breakfast            | MONDAY<br>Dinner      | Supper   |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Oatmeal      Milk    | Boiled Cabbage        | Vegetable Soup                                 |
| Whole Wheat Biscuits | White Pork            | (Tomatoes, potatoes, onions)                   |
| Butter               | Baked Irish Potatoes  | Toasted Whole Wheat                            |
| Soft Boiled Eggs     | Cornbread             | Biscuits                                       |
| Coffee (adults)      | Buttermilk (children) | Fresh Apples                                   |
| Milk (children)      |                       |  |
|                      | TUESDAY               |  |
| Fried White Pork     | Bean Loaf with Tomato | Spanish Rice (baked rice, tomatoes and cheese) |
| Whole Wheat Biscuits | Sauce                 | Cole Slaw                                      |
| Butter               | Turnip Greens         | Biscuits                                       |
| Coffee (adults)      | Mashed Potatoes       | Gingerbread                                    |
| Milk (children)      | Cornbread             | Buttermilk (children)                          |
|                      | Stewed Dried Apples   |  |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Breakfast</b><br>Oatmeal      Milk<br>Fried Mush   Molasses<br>Biscuits<br>Coffee (adults)<br>Buttermilk (children) | <b>WEDNESDAY</b><br><b>Dinner</b><br>Vegetable Soup<br>(cabbage, potatoes,<br>onions)<br>Turnip Greens with Pork<br>Cornbread<br>Stewed Prunes      | <b>Supper</b><br>Steamed Liver<br>Gravy<br>Baked Sweet Potatoes<br>Cornbread<br>Buttermilk (children) |
| Fried White Pork<br>Biscuits      Butter<br>Molasses<br>Coffee (adults)<br>Milk (children)                             | <b>THURSDAY</b><br>Rutabagas<br>Baked Beans<br>Mashed Potatoes<br>Cornbread<br>Gingerbread and<br>Applesauce  | Beef Stew with<br>Dumplings<br>(containing potatoes)<br>Biscuits<br>Buttermilk<br>Tangerines          |
| Fried Mush      Molasses<br>Biscuit      Butter<br>Coffee (adults)<br>Milk (children)                                  | <b>FRIDAY</b><br>Dried Peas with Pork<br>Candied Sweet Potatoes<br>Breaded Tomatoes<br>Cornbread<br>Stewed Prunes<br>Buttermilk                     | Turnip Greens<br>Creamed Potatoes<br>Sliced Onions<br>Cornbread<br>Fresh Apples                       |
| Oatmeal      Milk<br>Fried White Pork<br>Scrambled Eggs<br>Biscuit<br>Coffee (adults)<br>Buttermilk (children)         | <b>SATURDAY</b><br>Vegetable Soup<br>(tomatoes, potatoes,<br>onions)<br>Toasted Biscuits<br>Apple Tarts<br>Buttermilk (children)                    | Potato Cakes<br>Dried Peas with Pork<br>Cole Slaw<br>Cornbread<br>Caramel Sauce<br>Buttermilk         |
| Fried Mush      Molasses<br>Biscuit<br>Coffee (adults)<br>Milk (children)  | <b>SUNDAY</b><br>Baked Beans with Pork<br>Fried Potatoes<br>Breaded Tomatoes<br>Turnip Greens<br>Cornbread<br>Molasses Pie<br>Buttermilk (children) | Beans (left from dinner)<br>Cornbread<br>Peanut Butter<br>Sugar Cookies<br>Buttermilk<br>Tangerines   |

### The Family's Meals for \$1.00 a Week with Home Produced Food

If this same family practices the "Live-at-Home" slogan which means **a year round garden, poultry, a pig, and a cow** the market order can be cut to \$1.00 a week and the family would be better fed. These home produced foods mean **the best food for the family at the lowest cost.** The corn can be home grown and the molasses home produced. The following market order shows the possibilities with maximum home production. While circumstances may not permit all of these foods



to be produced at home, some idea of the cost reduction may be gained by comparing this order with the \$7.00 a week order.

**Milk**—home produced

#### Cereals

|   |        |     |
|---|--------|-----|
| Cornmeal (home grown)   |        |     |
| Oatmeal .....   | 1 lb.  | .08 |
| Whole Wheat Flour (bought<br>whole grained and ground<br>in local mill) ..... | 8 lbs. | .24 |
| White Flour .....   | 8 lbs. | .22 |
| Rice .....  | 1 lb.  | .05 |

#### Vegetables

A well planned garden will supply vegetables for the table at all seasons. The extra supply may be canned, dried or buried in sand-boxes and used when the garden is not producing. Tomatoes are especially valuable and should be canned for winter use.

#### Meat

Chicken may be used for meat. When cold weather seems certain the pig may be butchered and meat cured or used fresh.

#### Fruit

Peaches, pears, apples, and berries are valuable health protectors. Like vegetables, these may be dried or canned for use when out of season.

#### Fat

|                            |       |     |
|----------------------------|-------|-----|
| Butter (home produced)     |       |     |
| Lard (from butchered pig)  |       |     |
| Peanut Butter (home grown) | ½ lb. | .05 |

#### Sugar and Sweets

|                             |          |     |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----|
| Granulated Sugar .....      | 3 ½ lbs. | .18 |
| Molasses (home produced) .. | 2 lbs.   |     |

Eggs (home produced) ..... 2 doz.

#### Miscellaneous

|                        |       |     |
|------------------------|-------|-----|
| Coffee .....           | ⅓ lb. | .11 |
| Soda .....             | ¼ c.  | .02 |
| Salt .....             | ¼ c.  | .02 |
| Spice and Pepper ..... |       | .03 |

————— \$1.00

### The School Lunch

The best school lunch is one which includes **nutritious sandwiches, fruit, and milk**. Sandwiches may have a filling of softened dried fruit, peanut butter, left over meat, eggs, etc. Apples are usually the most reasonable fresh fruit. In most localities they may be home produced. Tangerines when in season may be purchased at a penny each. The school lunch room offers good values in foods which may supplement the lunch

brought from home. Soup, milk or fruit may be purchased for five (5) cents at school lunch rooms.

If the children are away from home during the noon meal it is wise to plan the family's meals so that the heavy meal of the day is served at night. Then it is possible to make up for the light midday meal which they have had at school.

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